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TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
SOUTH CAROLINA
STATE BOARD OF
FISHERIES

YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st, 1927.

TO THE
GOVERNOR *and*
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



1927

PRINTED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRINTING
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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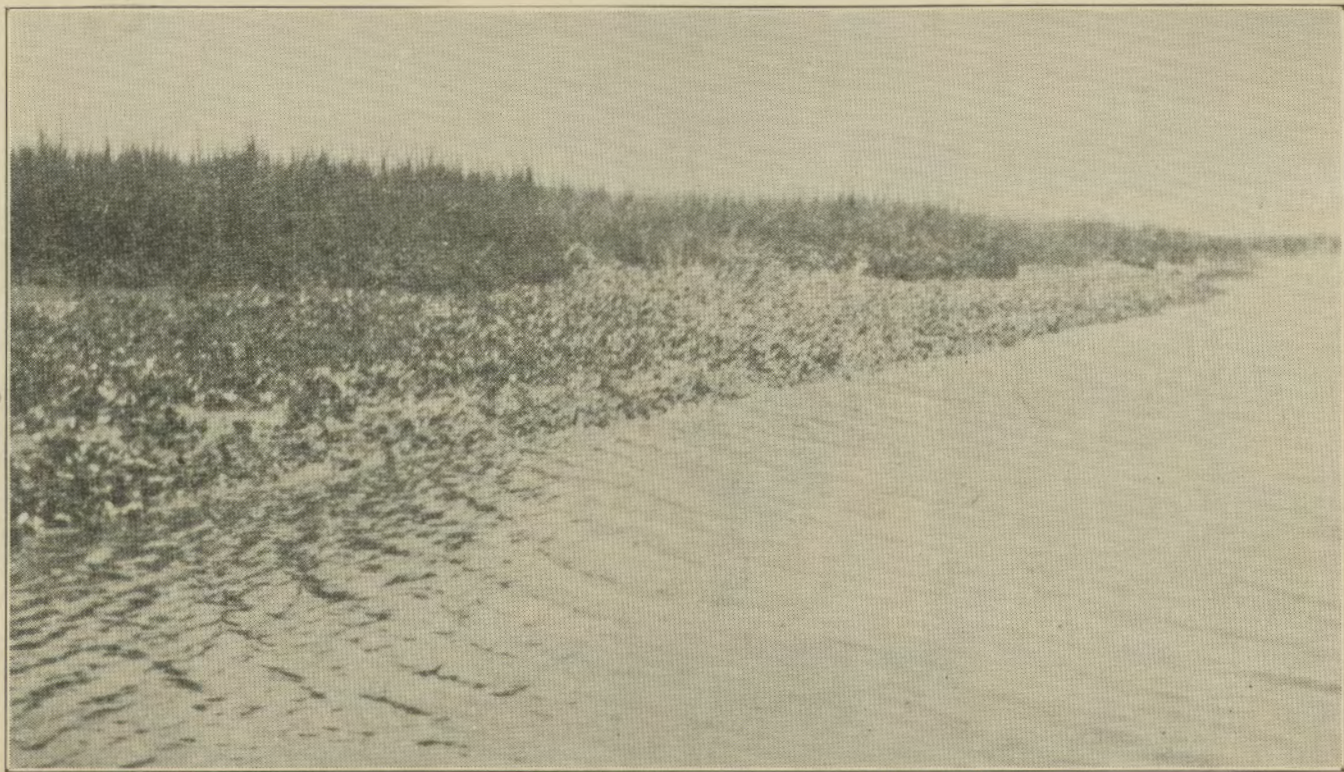
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How shore looks after planting Shell at high tide. Young Oysters set on these Shell.

REPORT

To His Excellency, John G. Richards, Governor, and the Honorable General Assembly of the State of South Carolina at its Session of 1928:

The Board of Fisheries herewith respectfully submit their annual report, for the year 1927, which includes as required by law, data and statistics with reference to the fisheries under their jurisdiction.

Since this Board has jurisdiction over the commercial fishing of the State, naturally the economic laws will control the out put, and the out put will control our revenue.

We are gratified while showing an increase in revenue to say, that the markets for fishery products have been very good. Canned oysters, for the first season in five years have paid the canner a profit, naturally he has increased his out put. The same can be said of canned shrimp, and raw shucked oysters. The rest of the products, handled by your Board are just about as last year as to the profits for the dealer.

CANNED OYSTERS

Our greatest revenue is from canned oysters, we had an increase in production this year of over seven million ounces, this gives us an increase in revenue over last year of \$2,642.40. Our planting of shell, also shows an increase in the canned oyster business, in the yield per bushel. 1922, the cannery had an average of 33 ounces per bushel, this has increased each year, until this year we show a yield of 38.9 ounces to the bushel. We attribute this entirely to cultivation, which we have carried on each year in planting shell.

RAW SHUCKED OYSTERS

We cannot say too much in regards to the work of the Health Department, in helping us increase the raw shucked oyster business. They have shown thoroughness in their work, and anyone using South Carolina oysters, can be assured that they are handled in a clean and sanitary manner. If it were not

for the work of this Department, the Raw Oyster Dealers would not be allowed to ship their product beyond the boundry of our State. We mentioned in our last report, that this work would take some time to show the real benefit to the State that it will ultimately show. Our increase in production this season, gives you some little idea of the possibility in this line of work, and we feel sure, that it is a matter of a few short years before the State of South Carolina will be exporting, instead of importing raw shucked oysters. Taking into consideration, the approximate amount of oysters used in the coastal cities, and homes along the coast, South Carolina must have produced this season not less than 75,000 gallons of oysters. Our books show that 41,199 gallons were shipped. This is an increase of 13,426 gallons over last year. Last season, there were 18 plants operating, this season we show 28. A goodly number of these have just started, and will of course increase next year's business. In 1924 at our request, you gave us a new law in regards to leasing oyster land. In this law, you only allowed us to lease deep water, one foot below low water mark, and you placed upon this lease a rental of \$5.00 per acre, per year, this is a larger rental than any other State south of Delaware. Delaware rental runs as high as \$10.00 per acre. We have had a hard time interesting any one to take up lands, because of the fact of this high rental, however, this year we have made our first lease, and the President of the company leasing this land, intends to increase their lease to 300 acres, and is perfectly willing (after calculating the possible profits he can get from the cultivation of one acre of oysters) to pay this \$5.00 rental, and states that he does not consider it at all out of reason, but just and proper. In the course of a few short years, South Carolina should have from this start from two to five thousand acres leased on this basis. You can readily see what income it will be to the State, figured from a rental standpoint, then realize that a 5 cents tax is collected on each gallon of oysters produced on this leased land, and that the Company spoken of above estimates that his gross income from an acre of leased land, will be \$800.00 a year, figured at the minimum. This will give you some idea of the amount of labor that will be produced in planting, gathering, shucking, and handling this product along our coast. We tell you again, that the work of this Board is a growing work, and will not be shown to its fullest extent for years to come.



On the way out to plant, May 25, 1927. 2,200 bushels of Shell.

SHAD

The delectable shad has shown a decrease this season. This decrease comes entirely from the Winyah Bay section, and shows that these people only caught 14,029 shad, whereas in former years the catch has been as much as 75,000 shad in one season. The above compared with 1926 will show 14,897 fish shy, and 1926 was considered a poor year, on account of storms the fishermen were unable to put in full time. This year's shad catch in the section spoken of above, is very hard to explain, especially when we tell you, that the St. Helena section had a better year than 1926, or 1925, and information received, tells us that Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia all had big seasons. The fishermen themselves cannot explain this shortage.

STURGEON

Information received, shows that the supply of Sturgeon in all waters wherein they have been caught have diminished to an alarming extent, and the catch each season shows a decrease. This holds good in our section as records show that the catch this year is 100 fish less than last year. Decrease in pounds amounts to 4,078. We will call this subject to your attention in our last paragraph.

DIAMOND BACK TERRAPIN

Since the opening of the Terrapin season in 1924, which had been closed for four years, our catch has been gradually decreasing, and we therefore, are surprised to tell you, that we have had a larger catch this year, than any other year since the season was opened. Our increase over last year amounts to 2,296 terrapin. We can attribute this to nothing other than the new law you gave us, not allowing the fisherman to catch five inch terrapin.

CLAM

Clams are shipped only from Horry and Georgetown Counties in our State, and we feel that this section has more or less depleted the supply by over fishing, because we fall short 1,680 bushels from last year's production. This condition will be remedied by a bill which will be introduced at this session. The balance of our State has numerous clam beds, that have never been fished.



On High Tide Planting Shell

SHRIMP

Canned shrimp bringing a fair market price this season, induced the canners to increase their production which gave us the largest shrimp catch we have ever had in this State. We caught this year 1,503,447 pounds of shrimp. This is an increase over last year of 741,923 pounds. The possibility along our coast is unlimited, since all these shrimp were caught in less than five miles of coast line, entirely in Beaufort County. Your Board is using all the persuasion they can to induce canners along our coast to enter this business, and believe that next season, we will show shrimping industries in Charleston, Georgetown, and other sections. Our catch looks infinitesimal when compared to Louisiana's 33,000,000 pounds, Georgia's 15,000,000 pounds, and Florida's 25,000,000 pounds. North Carolina which is as far as we know the northernmost limit of the migration of shrimp, or prawn, none having been caught north of that State, has larger catches than we have. The potentiality of the shrimp business in our State is very great, and in the course of a few years should show a large revenue to the State, and a wonderful vocation for the citizens along the coast.

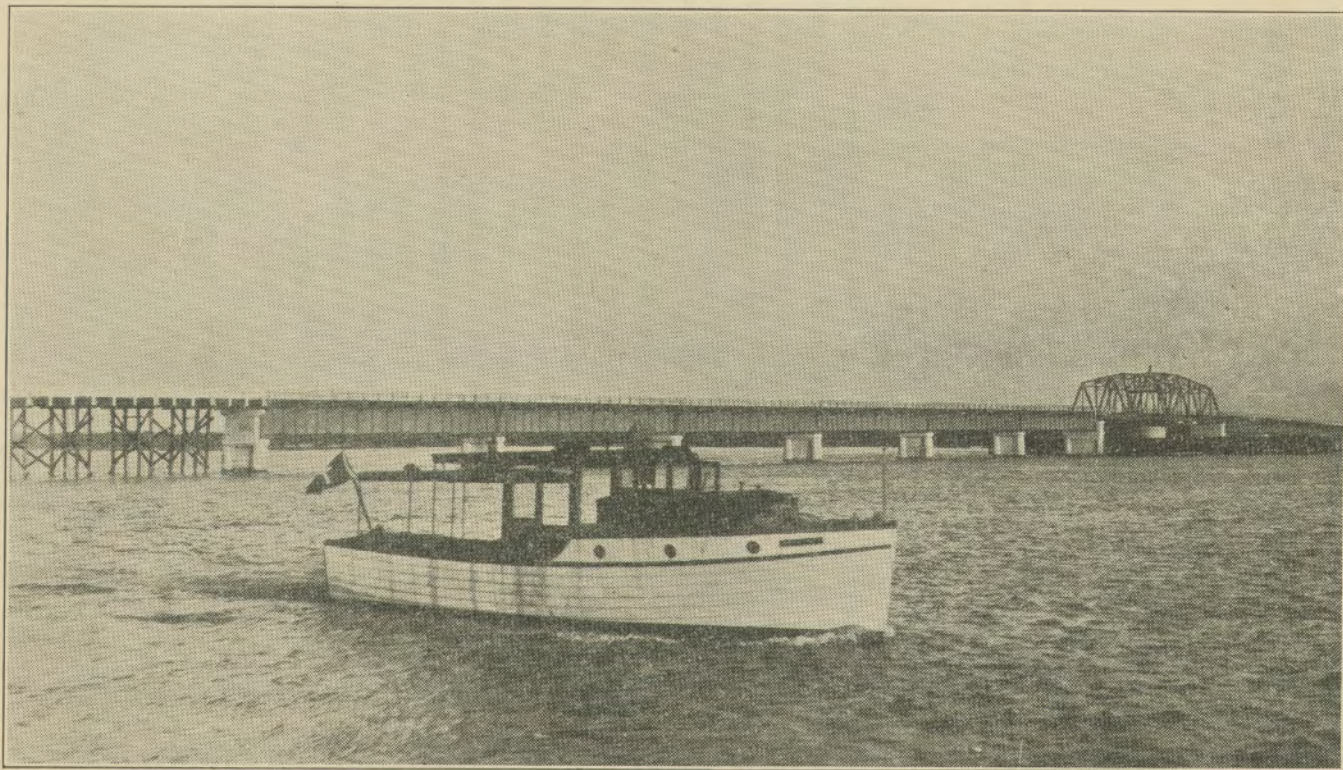
FISH

Our coast has never produced scale fish, other than shad and sturgeon, like the coast of the other States along the eastern shore of our country; the reason for this, we are unable to say, some say it is because of our shelving beaches, some say because of our extreme high tides, which tides are higher than any other place along the Atlantic Coast, south of Massachusetts. Some say it is because of our many rivers which causes our waters to be more or less muddy. We are unable to determine what it is, but know that we have no fishing of this description along our coast. Your Board has endeavored in every way possible to encourage this industry, and we have induced at different times fishermen to make an effort in this direction, but there has never been any amount of success in their undertakings. We hope to solve this question, and will still put forth effort in that direction. We of course catch a good many mullet, and what is known as winter, or salmon trout in season.

This would make a good showing to one who does not know the immense volume of some other States.

REVENUE

This Board took charge of the commercial fishing of the State in the latter part of 1923, of course it could not show any increase during the year of 1923, as it had only a small part of the year to work on. The total income of the Board of Fisheries, in 1922 was \$12,246.75. In 1924 our income increased to \$15,059.97. In 1925 our income increased to \$19,837.21. In 1926 on account of the markets being poor, our income decreased some \$300.00, however, our net profit that year showed an increase. In 1927 we come to you with a revenue of \$23,635.23, an increase over 1922 of \$11,388.48. This in any business in the world would be a wonderful success, and we feel that we are making fast progress, and will make larger progress as the laws, and changes in the laws, which we ask for and you gave us in 1924 begin to show their soundness. Our pride however, lies more in our net profit to the State. The net profit of 1922 showed \$2,299.17. We increased this profit in 1924 to \$4,239.85, in 1925 we still increased it by earning \$5,372.49, still again in 1926 with our revenue cut \$300.00, we increased this profit to \$5,832.08. We are proud to say that we come to you this year with a net profit of \$8,881.32, an increase over the year 1922 of \$6,582.15. This Board shows you a net profit over all expenses since they have taken charge of this department of \$24,372.14. We consider this a good beginning, and feel that it should be encouraging to the people of the State. Please bear in mind that this profit, or revenue comes entirely out of the fishing industry, and were there no fishing industry the State would be minus this amount. Since therefore, that the fisherman pays his ordinary taxes, just like any one else, and pays this extra, it appears to us that this fund should be set aside and used only for the benefit of the fishing industry and thereby encourage it to grow wherein it will be of such magnitude, that it will become a great income to the State of South Carolina. Many States follow this line, and all revenue taken in this manner, is set aside for this purpose only.



Board's Inspection Boat—Speed 25 Miles per Hour

BOATS AND EQUIPMENT

Last season, you gave us \$3,000.00 to buy a boat for the use of the Board and the Chief Inspector, to take the place of the \$4,500.00 boat which you had taken away from us the year before and given to the Health Department. Through friendship, among the captains of numerous yachts going by our port, we were enabled to gain information of just such boat as we needed at Jacksonville, Florida. We are glad to state that we secured a boat, which was built and equipped in 1926, and which cost \$10,000.00 when new, for the sum of \$3,000.00 which you allowed us. We have had this boat examined, both engine and hull by competent mechanics, and they state that the boat is as good as new. One of our leading fishermen, has offered \$5,000.00 for it. All our other boats (5 in number) we keep in first class condition, and believe that they are practically as good to-day, as they were when we built and equipped them in 1924. One being located at Conway, one at Georgetown, one at Charleston, one at Jacksonboro, and the other at Bluffton.

CONSERVATION

Secretary Herbert Hoover, at a meeting in Washington, of the heads of the conservation department of the different states along the coast, called by him during the typhoid oyster scare, spoke of the necessity of uniform laws, in regards to migratory fish, such as shad, and sturgeon. Your Board has waited for some action in this matter for two or three years, and not hearing of any, have requested the Bureau of Fisheries to call a meeting in Charleston, S. C. near February 10th, 1928 of all the Southeastern commissions of each State, including all Gulf States for the purpose of forming an association among these several departments of the different States, in order that they might work to-gether along this line, suggested by Mr. Hoover, and perhaps benefit all States concerned. We will be glad to have this conservation association meet in our State, and especially in our largest coastal city, Charleston, and we appreciate the Charleston Chamber of Commerce co-operating with us in getting this meeting, and we feel that a great good can be done in the conservation of shad and sturgeon. Besides, your Board will perhaps learn something from the discussion of the habits, breeding and migration of the wonderful fish known as

sturgeon and shad, and perhaps other fish which may be discussed at this meeting.

APPLICATIONS APPROVED AS FOLLOWS SWIMMING FISH

Colleton County	72
Beaufort County	134
Charleston County	120
Georgetown County	195
Horry County	231
Orangeburg County	6
Dorchester County	6
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Total	764

GILL NET

Colleton County	49
Beaufort County	58
Charleston County	57
Georgetown County	148
Horry County	33
Orangeburg County	4
Dorchester County	6
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Total	355

SHRIMP BOAT

Beaufort County	50
Georgetown County	3
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Total	53

SHRIMP NET

Beaufort County	50
Georgetown County	5
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Total	55

REGISTERED BOAT

Charleston County	11
Beaufort County	49
Total	60

NON-REGISTERED BOAT

Charleston County	5
Beaufort County	59
Total	64

OYSTER SHUCKING SHEDS

Beaufort County	21
Charleston County	5
Georgetown County	2
Total	28

OYSTER IN SHELL SHIPPERS

Beaufort County	4
Charleston County	2
Georgetown County	9
Horry County	9
Total	24

OYSTER CANNERS

Beaufort County	10
Charleston County	5
Georgetown County	1
Total	16

SHRIMP CANNERS

Beaufort County	3
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TERRAPIN PEN

Beaufort County	6
Charleston County	3
Colleton County	1
Total	<hr/> 10

TERRAPIN FARMS

Beaufort County	1
Charleston County	1

RAW OYSTERS MAY BE ITEMIZED AS FOLLOWS

	Gals. Shipped
Beaufort County	35,680
Charleston County	4,779
Totals	<hr/> 40,459

CANNED OYSTERS ITEMIZED AS FOLLOWS

	Bu. Gathered	Oz. Packed
Beaufort County	473,848	18,905,290
Charleston County	209,840	10,493,343
Totals	<hr/> 683,688	<hr/> 29,398,633

OYSTERS GATHERED AND SHIPPED IN SHELL AS FOLLOWS

	Bushels
Beaufort County	24
Georgetown County	358
Charleston County	51
Horry County	100
Total	<hr/> 533

SHELL PLANTED FOR CULTIVATION OF OYSTERS AS FOLLOWS

	Bushels
Charleston County	147,596
Beaufort County	250,395
Total	397,991

CLAMS AS FOLLOWS

	Bushels
Horry County	3,431

TERRAPIN CATCH AS FOLLOWS

Beaufort County	3,442
Colleton County	1,430
Charleston County	1,760
Total	6,632

STURGEON CATCH AS FOLLOWS

	No. Sturgeon	No. Pounds	Lbs. Caviar
Colleton County	78	1,987	115
Georgetown County	258	9,829	165
Total	336	11,816	280

SHAD CATCH AS FOLLOWS

	Lbs.
Beaufort County	} 35,241
Colleton County	
Charleston County	
Georgetown County	
Orangeburg County	
Horry County	

SHRIMP CATCH AS FOLLOWS

	Lbs.
Beaufort County	1,503,447

SHRIMP CANNED AS FOLLOWS

	Cans
Beaufort County (5 oz. cans)	860,128
Value of above canned shrimp	\$215,032.00

Louisiana catches 33,000,000 pounds, we have just started.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF SALE OF IMPOST
TAX STAMPS

	1925	1926	1927
Canned Oysters	\$ 7,374.29	\$ 6,475.52	\$ 9,117.92
Raw Oysters	732.52	1,389.15	2,047.20
Oysters in the Shell	11.35	53.00	53.30
Clam Stamps	364.45	1,026.30	678.40
Hickory Shad			23.26
Shad	3,956.55	4,297.74	2,304.56
Terrapin Stamps	1,279.90	1,067.80	1,063.40
Raw Shrimp	620.00	375.00	364.35
Cooked Shrimp	86.35	204.38	712.50
Registered Boat License	568.00	469.00	1,036.00
Non-Registered Boat License	114.00	171.00	229.50
Swimming Fish License	1,452.00	1,204.50	2,380.14
Shrimp Boat License	205.00	187.00	270.00
Shrimp Net License	236.50	160.00	280.00
Gill Net License	216.05	203.50	199.95
Oyster Canner's License	7.00	14.00	16.00
Terrapin Pen License	250.00	225.00	250.00
Terrapin Farm License	50.00	50.00	50.00
Shad Buyer's License	475.00	475.00	300.00
Sturgeon Net License	300.25	180.00	255.00
Sturgeon Buyer's License	100.00	100.00	300.00
Shrimp Buyer's License	135.00	25.00	10.00
Oyster Shucking Shed License	8.00	29.00	32.00
Clam Buyer's License		25.00	10.00
Shrimp Canner's License			3.00
Crab Dealer's License		2.00	3.00

Oyster Shell Shipper's Li.	6.00
Bed Certificates	3.00
Oyster Land Rent	1,110.00 983.50	1,458.75
Fines	190.00 190.00	175.00
Pound Nets	3.00
Hard Crab Stamps	2.00
Soft Crab Stamps	4.00
Total	\$19,837.21 \$19,590.29	\$23,635.23

	Equipment	Maintenance
Appropriation for Board 1927	\$3,120.00	\$15,945.00
Used Appropriation	3,111.50	14,757.31
Unsued Appropriation	8.50	1,187.59
Total Unused Appropriation		\$1,196.19
Refund Shown in Treasurer's Office		3.40
		\$1,199.59
Total Income of Board		\$23,635.23
Maintenance		14,753.91
Net Profit Over Maintenance		\$ 8,881.32

PROFITS

1924	\$ 4,239.85
1925	5,372.49
1926	5,878.48
1927	8,881.32
Total	\$24,325.74
Value of Oyster Shell Planted 1927	\$19,899.55
Approximate number of people employed in the fishing industry	15,000

Approximate volume of business done in fishing industry
of State\$2,000,000.00

Approximate amount invested in fishing industry \$1,000,000.00

Respectfully,

E. D. RANEY, Chairman,

J. W. DOAR,

E. M. SEABROOK,

South Carolina State Board of Fisheries.